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DANIEL FIGUEROA III
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

July 8, 2004

Chairman Michael Powell
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, DC 20554

Re: WC Docket No. 03-133

Dear Chairman Powell:

The Puerto Rican and Latino community of New York has been the beneficiary of lower prices and new services from prepaid calling cards. But those benefits are now at risk, and members of the community may soon see prices for these cards increase, simply so that large local telephone companies can collect inflated "access charges" on the calls we make.

Many of my constituents stay connected by using calling cards; over forty percent of Latino households have used them to make keeping in touch more affordable. At a time in which gas costs over \$2 per gallon and the cost of other consumer products are rising, the Latino community should not be asked to take money from its pockets to place it in the hands of some of the largest companies in America.

Many Latino consumers cannot afford telephone service, particularly when required by the local phone company to make hefty deposits before a telephone line to their home is connected. Pre-paid calling cards give these otherwise "disconnected" Latinos the ability to look for jobs, find affordable housing, make an appointment for a doctor, and stay in touch with family across the country by utilizing public payphones or by using telephone of friends and neighbors. In addition, small businesses may use these cards to keep their telecom costs fixed and low, which can be important to the success of a new, minority-owned enterprise.

I urge the Commission **not** to add new access charges and other fees to paid calling card services. If you do, the nation's most price-sensitive telephone consumers will immediately feel the burden.

Sincerely,



Peter M. Rivera

Member of Assembly

cc: Commissioner Michael Copps
Commissioner Kathleen Abernathy
Commissioner Kevin Martin
Commissioner Jonathan Adelstein
Senator Charles Schumer
Senator Hillary Clinton